

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: WB UR
SUBJECT: TAGESSPIEGEL EDITORIAL ON HUMAN RIGHTS

SUMMARY: IN A FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL ENTITLED "THE LIMITS"
TAGESSPIEGEL CHIEF EDITOR, JOACHIM BOELKE, QUESTIONS THE
VALIDITY OF EXCHANGING SOVIET SPIES FOR JAILED HUMAN RIGHTS
ACTIVISTS. END SUMMARY

1. IN A FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL ENTITLED "THE LIMITS" , AUGUST 2,
TAGESSPIEGEL CHIEF EDITOR JOACHIM BOELKE REVIEWED CURRENT
PRACTICES USED TO OBTAIN RELEASE TO THE WEST OF POLITICAL
PRISONERS IN THE GDR AND THE SOVIET UNION.

2. BOELKE ALLOWS THAT THE PRESENT FRG PRACTICE OF OBTAINING
THE RELEASE OF CERTAIN POLITICAL PRISONERS IN GDR JAILS BY
PAYING RANSOM MONEY IS HIGHLY IMMORAL, BUT POSSIBLY JUSTIFIABLE.
MONEY IS APPLIED AS A LEVER IN LIEU OF POLITICAL INFLUENCE ON
THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE GDR, AND IN RETURN THE
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GDR BARGAINS OFF ITS RIGHT TO PUNISH WHAT IT TERMS
POLITICAL OFFENDERS FOR THE SO URGENTLY NEEDED FOREIGN
CURRENCY.

3. BOELKE OBSERVES THAT THE CONTINUATION OF THIS SORT
OF RANSOM ACTIVITY ENEN AFTER SIGNING THE TREATY OF
PRINCIPLES (GRUNDVERTAG) WITH THE GDR, AND FOLLOWING THE

EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON COOPERATION AND SECURITY AT
HELSINKI REVEALS MUCH ABOUT THE CURRENT POLITICAL
SITUATION IN THE WORLD.

4. RECENTLY, HOWEVER, BOELKE WRITES A SITUATION HAS
DEVELOPED WHICH THREATENS TO COMPLETELY REARRANGE THE
PRINCIPLES PRESENTLY IN EFFECT, NAMELY THE POLLIBILITY
OF EXCHANGING CONVICTED SOVIET SPIES FOR IMPRISONED
SOVIET DISSIDENTS. BOELKE QUESTIONS THE VALIDITY OF
LEAVING THE GROUNDS OF CLASSICAL METHODS EMPLOYED IN
FOREIGN POLICY AND CHANGING OVER TO INSTRUMENTS OF AN
ALTOGETHER DIFFERENT GENRE. BOELKE ISSUES EXPRESS
WARNINGS AGAINST "EXCHANGING SOVIET SPIES AGAINST DE-
FENDERS OF HUMAN RIGHTS BECAUSE THE LATTER ARE THEREBY
DOWNGRADED TO THE STATUS OF SPIES, SOMETHING WHICH THE
SOVIET UNION INTENDED TO ACCOMPLISH ALL ALONG."

5. COMMENT: BOELKE IS PROBABLY THE MOST THOUGHTFUL
AND KNOWLEDGEABLE POLITICAL COMMENTATOR IN BERLIN.
END COMMENT. NELSON

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